Three Stages of Church Development
Presented by Fletcher L. Tink

Three Stages:

1. Church as “Lighthouse”
   a. The world is sinful and needs to be saved
   b. The focus is on evangelism, reaching out to the world
   c. The pastor is “evangelist”

2. Church as “Schoolhouse”
   a. The world is uninformed and the church needs to do better public relations
   b. The focus is on advocating outside and training inside the church
   c. The pastor is “ambassador”

3. Church as “Clubhouse”
   a. The world is overlooked or ignored. The church itself is the center of attention
   b. The focus is on serving the parishioners, running as efficiently as possible the “business” of church
   c. The pastor is the “CEO” running the organization

Observations:

1. Churches start as lighthouse, but over time, metamorphize as schoolhouse, then as clubhouse.

2. The Clubhouse stage may be a precursor to the dying process.

3. A healthy larger church probably has leadership that addresses all these stages.

4. A church skewed into one of the orientations probably will have tension with leadership which is solely committed at another of these stages.

5. A church which is moving through stages 2 and 3, needs to find renewal through rediscovering its evangelistic mission of lighthouse.

Helpful Quote:

“It is necessary to engage the world, but don’t marry it.”